

BEYOND THE TWILIGHT

GEORGE W. HARRINGTON



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BEYOND THE TWILIGHT

A BOOK OF VERSE

BY

GEORGE W. HARRINGTON

Author of "A Reversion of Form," etc.



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TO THE MEMORY OF
HOWARD WILBUR SLADE
CLARENCE SUTHERLAND WALLACE
CLAUDIA ELIZABETH KELLOGG
CHARLES F. McGAHAN
AND
WILLIAM WALTON WOOLSEY

FRIENDS OF LONG AGO
THE AUTHOR IN LOVE, GRATITUDE AND HUMILITY
DEDICATES THIS SHEAF OF VERSE.

Companions ever near to me,
Who've answered to the Heavenly call!
Yes, while they held my hand
Fond eyes met eyes as fond;
And I would not forget
Their touch, their sympathy.

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GERALD

THE little feet that patter
 Across the nursery floor,
Tiny hands that tug so hard
 At the giant-fashioned door,
The high pitched cry of welcome,
 And the ready, gleeful laugh,
Greet the coming home of "Dad,"
 Now a king—and more, by half.

The dear, wee form, close cuddled,
 Fairy fingers searching out
Some odd, reluctant treasure—
 To be greeted with a shout—
The cheeks aglow with gladness
 And the eyes alight with joy—
Pray, what has God made better
 Than our blithe, bewitching boy?

BEFORE THE DAWN

THE sweet tranquillity of night
Hath hushed and changed a troubled
world;—

Cast its soft, mysterious light
Where hosts of day their jav'lines hurled.

Hard hours of toil and stress—of strife—
Have given place to gentler mood;
To higher, better things of life
Than brother seeking brother's blood.

Gentle radiance of yon moon
Doth suggest a kindlier bent
That steels the thews of fighters soon
To strike the blows of Thor's portent.

Calm, majestic, beauteous night!
Serene, untroubled—breathing peace!
I pray to thee, Lead, Kindly Light:—
From fray and foray grant release.

STRESS

THE river is dark and restless,
Beneath a cloud-swept sky;
Sinister tales it seems to tell
Of men who've sought to die—
Drawing watery covers about them,
As down to rest they lie.

Is the river brazen, boastful,
Concealing black remorse
For deeds it's seen, and help'd to do?
(O men of bitter loss!)
Stay! did they compass repose, I wonder,
Leaving this life by force?

The stream is mute, nor gives a sign
To still its eerie soul;
While hard-pressed men look on, in fear,
So difficult their goal!—
O taciturn river, pray tell, to-night,
Dost look to *me* for toll?

FRIDAY EVENING

THERE is no music in the world
As sweet to me
As this, when shouted with acclaim
In ev'ry key
(Yet tenderly)
"Daddy's come home!"

GROWING OLD

WHEN my usefulness is ended

And my strength has been expended,
When no longer do I feel a zest for life,

Take me to a realm far better—

Ah! I know *this* to the letter,

Weary, troublous, hollow world of bitter strife!

Yes, a brighter day'll be dawning

On a fair, auspicious morning,

When I 'waken in the Land of Bye-and-bye.

There, my dear companions greeting,

In a glad, unsullied meeting—

There I'll face Eternity without a sigh.

HEIGHTS AND DEPTHS

“THERE is no Heaven and no Hell,” he cried,
And then he died.

Ah! he had never known the poignant bliss
Of offspring’s kiss,
Nor yet endured the bitter, blighting pain
Of work in vain.

PALS

I

“You awsk me w’y I’m lookin’ queer to-day?
I’ve ’ad a spill, a cruel, ugly fall.
I’ll not come right. They’ve put a friend away,
A honest friend, as never funk’d a call.”

CHORUS

*“ ’E was a bold un, bad to beat,
Light was ’is ’eart an’ quick ’is feet,
Game was ’is eye, ’is bone was neat—
My good old gallopin’ pal!”*

II

“Per’aps you’ve ’eard o’ ‘The Governor’s Cup,’
’Eld on the ‘Round ’Ill Course,’ at Ferry-
town!
My eye! It took a ’chaser to stand up:
’Twas jump ’em true an’ big—or else go
down.”

III

“I was ridin’ at ten-stone-ten that day.
‘Our colors?’ The ‘Purple with crimson
bars!’
I cared a lot w’at the owner’d say,
As I knotted my reins an’ blest my stars.”

IV

“A school-boy friend, Bill Flynn—called Reddy
Flynn
(’Cause ’is knob was a bloomin’ carrot top)—
Was up on a chestnut mare by Gunga Din.
Eh? ‘W’at name?” The Firefly—dam, Mala-
prop.”

V

“In this same race was useful Lure o’ Gold,
Fresh from a ’andy win at Leopardstown;
An’ flippant timber topper, Blithe an’ Bold,
That led at Beecher’s Brook—an’ then went
down.”

.

VI

“At the open ditch The Firefly mistook,
(Tried to ‘Put in a short one,’ understand).
I say, that purler ’ad a nawsty look,
An’ in the flurry down went Wonderland.”

VII

“Now I was comin’ just a bit be’ind,
On this same Valiant ’Eart, w’ats dead to-
day:
An’ ’e was leppin’ big an’ runnin’ kind;
I—sittin’ still an’ smilin’—knew ’e’d stay.”

VIII

“ ’E rose, an’ as ’e did so ’elp me ’e
Saw old Firefly an’ Reddy Flynn—undone:
(You’ll think I lie, just ’cause it *couldn’t* be)
’E caught a foot’old w’ere there wasn’t none.”

IX

“ ’E gave a grunt, a shudder an’ a throw,
(’E threw a lep that measur’d thirty-four)
An’ put ’is feet beyond the ’orse an’ so
’E miss’d the lad’s red ’ead—but nothin’
more.”

X

“No, ‘Lose ’is stride’? not ’e, not Valiant ’Eart;
’E ’eld the leader safe, did ’Ero’s son,
Toss’d back the plough, at water did ’is part,
An’ through the straight ’e wore ’em down—
an’ won.”

.

XI

“Is it so odd I’m feelin’ bad?—I say
I aint ashamed because my eyes are wet:
We don’t make friends, nor bury, ev’ry day.
I loved this ’orse—an’ wonder w’at he’ll get.”

CHORUS

*“ ’E was a bold un, bad to beat,
Light was ’is ’eart an’ quick ’is feet,
Game was ’is eye, ’is bone was neat—
My good old gallopin’ pal!”*

INTROSPECTION

A RAINDROP fell against the pane;
It trickled down, now left, now right:
It paused irresolute, then sped
Uncertain, shy, afraid, unled;
Then joined another in like plight.
My life, alas! Confused—in vain.

CHOOSING—TO-DAY

I

THE unkind look, the caustic word,
The petty, selfish deed
(Oh! Miserable greed!)
Make life a little harder,
On this weary, foot-worn road.

II

The happy face, the cheery voice,
The generous, helpful act
Make better things a fact;
And lighten heavy burdens,
So that pilgrims sad may smile.

COMPANIONS

THEY gather 'round me in the gloom,
Those faces once so dear to me,
Emerging from the mists of time.

I ne'er withdraw—or say them nay—
They come not at my fond recall;
They come, alas, I know not why.

Not always are they near—and like,
So like, their unresembled selves!
They come and go, quite uncontrolled.

Mayhap their mission reassures
That life goes on beyond the veil,
Beyond the soft'ning veil of peace.

Sweetly they temper and assuage
The poignant bitterness of life;
And give regret, and make it dear.

Their tender presence ever prompts
To better thought and fairer deed,
To purity, to hope, to faith.

Would they safeguard me from myself?

Pointing a truer, nobler way,
Uplift and bless and cherish me?

When barren pastures lie behind

And verdant valleys fill the ken,
Fuller, radiant life were mine.

PAIN

WHAT destiny doth shape the course
Of this unhappy hour called life?
What mute and iron compulsion
Doth force and bind us to this strife?—
This bitter, racking, woeful strife!

The strange and poignant mystery—
Of which the first and last is pain
(With pain and yet more pain between)—
What does it mean? From whence it came?
Wilt leave of us a fleeting name?

Why needful is the knotted lash?
And how deserved the barbèd dart?
The promise sweet—believed, unkept—
Hath made us bleed within the heart.—
We meet, we love—and then we part.

Ah! cruel, baffling, secret screed!
No writing on the wall we know.—
We're here to-day, and suffer here:
But whence we came, or where we go
Is hid from penitents below.

DESPAIR NOT

Just around the corner

 We may meet a friend;

Just around the corner

 Troubles sometimes end.

 So cheer up a bit, with me;

 Try the good in life to see.

Never drag around the corner

 Like a melancholy mourner,

But expect a lot of sunshine 'round the bend.

PRIVILEGE

WHY is it that a downy bed is mine?
And why at laden boards am I a guest?
What right have I to wear this linen fine?
And in the cool sea breeze at night find rest?

Others began their trying toil before
My eyes had opened on this scorching day:
Others had tossed uneasy at the door
Of labor's call—and yet they feared delay.

My work is not as hard, by far, as theirs;
My food is better and my nights bring rest:
My hours are unoppressed by blighting cares.—
'Twould seem that bias, stark, were manifest.

I do not know why these things are, but know
That favored as I am I should be kind;
And giving gladly offered help, should go
Into their lives, to meet what need I find.

A SONG OF HOPE

I'M weary to-night, Dear Heart,
Weary but thankful—content—
Roads have been long, and the heat
Gave not a sign 'twould relent.

To-morrow the day may dawn
Refreshing, the breeze from the sea:—
To-night—to-morrow—I know
Belov'd, I am one with thee.

IN REVIEW

WHERE lies the charm of jewel rare?
Of what avail this hoard of gold?
A wealth of riches doth not spare,
But adds futility untold.

For thee, Dear Heart, I've lived—for thee:
Possession's worthless dross doth pall,
Bald ownership a dream, ah, me!
These mocking baubles but enthrall.

The empty boast of vain display,
The sullied might of atoms swayed,
Prove sacrilegious in this hour,
With schism and rebellion flayed.

O God! against Thy awesome will
I marshalled childish purposes,
And sought my petty hour to fill
With lean, ambitious heresies.

Fair One, I've built as folly's slave
A house upon the sands—for thee;
And all God gave to me I gave—
A beggar's principality.

I've planned and toiled and striven, to ends
As impotent as hands of man
To still the flood that Neptune sends,
Or lift from racial yoke the ban.

The waste and ruin of such quest,
Its utter folly, now I see:
To Fate I urge my last behest—
Perpetuate thy love for me.

Yes, let me keep this fragrant love;
Yet to give back, nor stint, in kind:
And so make earth like Heav'n above,
And vast, celestial beauties find.

QUESTIONS

AH! I wonder why I wait,
Leaning on this moss-grown gate;
Musing, yes, and deeply dreaming,
While the bustling world is teeming.
Would I know the ultimate?

Do I ask the driven race
Why this wild, unreas'ning pace?
Surely, all the world's contriving,
In a scheming, frenzied striving.
Does this serve a valid case?

Shall I seek the reason, why
Travelers seem bound to try
Paths that lead but to confusion,
Whose reward is disillusion?
Ah! to live is but to die.

Better far to be content,
Than in sorrowed years repent.
Driven by ambition's prodding,
There are weary millions plodding
O'er the roads of strange consent.

Give me love and peace and hope:
Yes, and strength I'd have, to cope
With the things the age's providing.
Give me benefits abiding;
Thus, not far a-field I'd grope.

PADDOCK FRIENDS

OF all the joys of a selfish world,
The one that stirs me most
Is the feel of a game, bold-striding horse
In the field or on the harrowed course,
Or keen one at the post.

Then to the breezes dull care I throw,
And just a moment *live*:
For the love of the beast is in my blood;—
And I know he'll be true, through fire and flood,
Ready, his best to give.

When worries and disappointments sore
Make life a bitter grind,
There's a sport that changes the face of
things—
To the jaded nerves a sweet tingling brings—
Oh! recreation kind!

CHORUS

Oh! love of a horse
Brings us no remorse;
And we've much to learn—not get—:
He is game and true,
And all through and through
Will *try* till his sight grows set.
He wont repulse or pass one by;
Or look with cold, unfriendly eye.
He's game and staunch—he'll do or die:
And more—he wont forget.

SATURDAY NIGHT

CLOSING hours of the closing day
Of this fair, full-measured week!
Little more and we shall start afresh,
To reëxperience dangers
And delights of beck'ning, unspoil'd hours.

I see where I have worked amiss,
Unwisely, and have drifted far.
To-morrow, when chance to make amends
Is given, I shall know—must act:
For some week end will be the last; then—

A PLEA

TELL me, O Mother, the meaning of life;
Show me the use of this pitiless strife,
Thou who hast borne me, by whom I am here,
Make me awaken to light and to cheer.

Teach me to know the omnipotent plan,
Show me that even in life's briefest span
All leads to an end as definite, true,
As rivers that flow to the ocean blue.

Turning my eyes toward the sunrise of hope,
In the mystery-light of dawn remote,
Teach me, O Mother, to watch and to pray
For the beaut'ous light of the open day.

Teach me to look upon sorrow as best,
Tell me that gloom shall be changed into rest;
Show me that sadness no longer shall mar,
When clear is my path by the new-found star.

MY JOYS

SOMETIMES when I am sad
And life seems all awry,
I sigh,
And wonder why 'tis so,
Dolorously lament,
Intent
On some much-thought-of thing.

But when I stop to think
I feel it vain and wrong
To long,
And to deplore, unheld
The things that fate controls—
The tolls
Of life, its discipline.

For three great joys have I;
Nor would I take the world,
Unfurled,
In place of kingdom mine:
My soul glad music makes—
Awakes:
Thrice blest and more am I.

“Riches?” you ask. Not that.

“Or wealth of broad design?”

“Youth’s wine?”

No, none of these. Far more.

Wouldst know my vaunted bliss?

’Tis this;

My joys are three dear boys!

THE GARDEN OF TRUTH

WITH those I love I cannot always go
 Into the hallowed heart of things,
Into the gardens wondrously a-bloom
 With blossoms beautiful and rare—
Grown nobly, by the uncompellèd Hand of
 Truth,
 By the omnipotent Hand of Truth,
Which cannot fail or sow amiss—
 I stand and wait.

Though love of mine be strong,
 I cannot take them by my side;
As I would have them walk,
 Exploring this eternal Paradise,
Gazing into tranquil, limpid streams,
 List'ning to the rapturous song of birds—
That garden which is athrob
 With melody.

They seem to lag, to wander and to drift
 Away from me—ever, alas, away;
Nor do they clasp my hand,
 Impelled by the sights and sounds and scents
Of praise and unenslaved delight,
 Of comfort in the truth of Truths
As old, unchallenged and entire
 As things unseen by Man.

My heart beats with the strange presence—
Pervasive, rapturous, ethereal;
Emotion holds and rules me:
I am alone and my tears,
The unaccustomed tears of man's estate,
Fall on the sweet, cool moss.

WHEN THE SHADOWS HAVE DEEPENED

THE soft, mysterious curtains of the night are
drawn;

Impalpable, by unseen hands controlled.

Imperious demands of day are stilled. For day-
light

Faded into dusk: and now enrolled

Among the sunlit hours of the past we know is
kept

This record of success and loss, untold.

THE COMMON LOT

IN the cortege we are marching,
Of the friends who loved us well:
And our silent tongues are parching,
As we listen to the knell.
For the bell is tolling, tolling:
Of our anguish does it tell.

In the years forever passing,
We are losing, one by one,
Fond companions, 'round us massing
When the journey was begun.
From the ranks they're falling, falling.—
Will the end find us alone?

On our right, the stricken mother;
On our left, the orphan son;
Just before, the grief-bowed brother;
Just behind, the wife of one
Who has loved and worked, nor faltered:—
Now his brief probation's done.

In the depths of night, beguiling,
They are calling, from beyond;
They are beck'ning; they are smiling;
Though the darkness doth surround.
In my loneliness, I'm waiting—
Earthly loneliness, profound.

THE DEAR ONES AT HOME

RADIANT moon, look down on those I love ;

And with thy soft effulgence gently bathe
Them in a blessèd, tranquillizing light.

Yes, in thy fixed, unhurried passage through
The vast, immutable heavens of night,

Look down, with pity and with love, on mine.

THE FIRE HORSE

“We do not regard it as proper economy to pension horses used in any department of city work.”

Sentiment of Municipal Office-Holders.

WE galloped to the fire,
In the stillness of the night;
And stood 'mid flying embers,
While the boys waged deadly fight.
When the street was cold, forsaken;
(Folk at engine's stroke awaken)
Just because we knew 'twas right.

When the cuddled child slept well,
With a favored doll, in bed;
When the weak and ill and old
Would prepare to meet their dead;
Then, oftimes, the call was sounded:
Forth, at such alarm, we bounded,
Asking none to go, instead.

Who protects the city's wealth?
And safe-guards the mansions grand?
Saving millions, year by year,
For the richest of the land:
And he is yet the poor man's friend;
Hard-earned holdings to defend.
Is he wanting—on demand?

Has man our toil requited?
And our hurts and pains allayed?
Or worked for our protection—
(He, whom we have seen afraid)?
Is the Golden Rule suspended,
When our usefulness is ended?
Does he pay as Judas paid?

L'ENVOI

Hark! The knacker's cart is coming,
With its brains-bespattered floor.
(They are swinging off—and backing;)
Now it stands before the door.
Yes, it means the boys have bought me,
Ere the huckster's lash had taught me
I could save the town no more.

PREPARATION

STRIVE to make the birthdays brighter,
Pray Heaven show us better ways:
Try to make the burdens lighter—
For homemates welcome sunshine's rays.

Somber hosts of night assemble,
Full hours of usefulness ago!—
In the balance bliss doth tremble—
May natal days forecast The Dawn.

HEAT IN THE TENEMENTS

'Tis morning in the tenements.

The sleepless-eyed and staring folk
Stumble along the grimy halls

And totter down the foot-worn stairs:

Wan, unrefreshed by slumber's boon,

Or by the early day's repast!

For who can sleep when Hell is loose?

Or eat, while Demon Heat is king?

Children their playmates hardly greet;

Listlessly, mirthlessly they meet

In the bare, foul, sun-cursèd street.

'Tis noon: the scorching sun pours down

On this furnace, whose victims writhe.

Weary and worn, confused and pale,

At windows, doors, in bits of shade,

Hopeless women, desperate men

Must pant and stare and wait, *for what?*—

No help in sight from cloudless sky;

Surrounding stone repels the touch.

The mockery of lunch! Oh, think!

A crust, a sip of tepid drink

On delirium's awful brink.

'Tis night—the night of pain and dread:
Some will be “is” and others “was”
When morrow calls for sacrifice.
Tenements are groaning; unrest
Fills airless halls and stifling rooms—
A child moaning in fitful sleep!
Tranquillity hath stood aloof;
Sweet peace of night is far removed.
God help the troubled dwellers here;
Their earthly potion, pain and fear!
Life's white branding iron doth sear.

L'ENVOI

Oh! The dividends from warrens of men
May buy immunity
For idlers who loll in their motor-cars,
Surrounding false-caste with firm outer-bars.
But can they *always* flee
The mothers' wail,
When life doth fail
The child of the tenements?

AS WE WOULD HAVE THEM WALK

As I tuck my boys in their beds, at night,
I breathe a prayer that in manhood's fight
They'll be brave and true, and face The Good
Light—
The Light That Faileth Not.

OUR FATHER'S CHILDREN

THIS life is fraught with blighting cares,
With sorrow, grief and pain:
Yet we are wasting precious days
In selfish, sordid gain.
Our neighbor is a shadow, dim;
While fiercely, in the struggle, grim,
We slay—nor count the slain.

Would we but pause to see and feel
The *human* things of life,
A new, glad light would flood our souls,
And end this bitter strife.
Ah! shame on this relentless war!
Against potential friends—and more.
Bring peace, where woe was rife.

God gave a noble heritage—
Enough, and yet to spare—
A precious patrimony, vast;
Largess for all to share.
But we, like Cain, have sought the blood
Of brothers; who through fire and flood
Should have our constant care.

Ah! could we here but understand!
As children knowing well
The guiding hand, the tender kiss!
Beneath one roof to dwell
Would be a sweet experience.—
God give us sight, from this day hence,
Brothers from dross to tell.

ONLY A JOCKEY

“THEY arsked ’im if ’e’d ride the ’orse.

’E said, ‘You bet I will!’

They said, ‘It’s nawsty, sloppy goin’.’

’E said, ‘ ’oo’d funk a spill’? ”

There are those who look,

And those who book;

And also those who ride.

There are those who fear

(For life is dear);

And those who stem the tide.

“ ’E steadied ’im, an’ ’eld ’im straight;

An’ nurs’d ’im, as a kid.

Deep, yawnin’ Liverpool an’ water

Fell be’ind ’im: ’ow ’e slid!”

There are those who look,

And those who book;

And also those who ride.

There are those who fear

(For life is dear);

And those who stem the tide.

“At the lawst jump, ’e was blown an’ pump’d,

Game an’ bold ’orse, ‘My Pard’;

’E caught it above ’is bended knees,

An’ somersaulted, ’ard.

*There are those who look,
And those who book;
And also those who ride.
There are those who fear
(For life is dear);
And those who stem the tide.*

“This lad got the ’igh-prized floral plate
(Above ’is jacket, laid).
Boys! Jockeys may ride between the flags,
An’ come an’ go; ’e’s *staid*.”

*There are those who look,
And those who book;
And also those who ride.
There are those who fear
(For life is dear);
And those who stem the tide.*

THE LAST ANALYSIS

WHEN I am called before the Bar
Of Justice, in The Land Afar,
Will some kind advocate appeal?
And zealously, for my best weal,
Lift up his voice and plead my cause?
Lest justice falsify her laws.

Will this solicitor explain
That I have tried—though tried in vain—
My part to do, throughout life's day?—
But circumstance fair plans did flay—
Have striv'n, fallen, risen, to be
Repulsed by opportunity.

Will he avow that I have stood,
With Toil as sponsor—pledged to good—
Knocking at Kismet's fateful door?
To ask, to plead; yea, to implore:
And coldly turned away have been—
And not for blight, or sloth, or sin.

Yea, I have loved and planned and tried:
A hundred lives have lived; and died
As many score. Seared eons have dragged,
And small-houred death-watch lagged,
As I have paced this grisly cell.—
Deliv'rance? Or the lethal knell?

THE MESSAGE

How pleasant 'tis to hear from those at home,
When working in the noisy, man-choked town,
To know that someone feels and cares—and
waits!

It serves to make the burden light;
It gives one heart to toil and fight;
It steels the arm with righteous might;—
This help from those at home.

ALONE

AMONG the busy crowd I move,
But with a stranger's footsteps tread;
An alien, unknown entity!
As through the throngs my way I thread
No friendly heart doth beat for me.

Alone! And in the midst of men!
One of a thousand; yet removed
By some strange circumstance of Fate.
An isolated soul, approved
By none to whom it would relate.

What destiny hath shaped my course,
Or moulded this unhappy clay?
What full-wrought power did assign
Me to this ill-befitting day?—
This troubled day, of stress malign.

To be with men, yet not *of* men!
To feel the hostile scrutiny
Of these, my brothers, who protest
Such kinship! Ah! 'twere mutiny
To leave the craft, for aye—and rest.

Yet, flagging is my weary brain;
And sorely aches a painèd heart;
The cruel hunger of the soul
Contorts me with its barbèd dart—
Swift driven to its chosen goal.

Ay! laughter springs at light command
To lips that frame the passing jest:
And ready is the list'ning ear,
To play the gay, complaisant guest.—
My starving soul cries out for cheer.

“MAKING GOOD”

WHEN the job is hard and galling
And hills and streams are calling,
When monotony is palling
And disgust doth fill my heart,
With jangled nerves contesting
And bitterly protesting,
Yes, connected thought arresting,
I must mutely do my part.

I must grit my teeth and hustle,
In hurly-burly bustle;
I must “bank” on brain and muscle,
Or success will pass me by.
Though I may not care a copper
That things be right and proper,
I must never “come a cropper”—
Nor the “kiddies’ ” claims deny.

ALL THAT WE KNOW

HERE not to rule,
Here not to stay:
Here not to fool
God's time away.

Here but to work and wonder—
Gasping, 'tween blow and blunder—
Waiting for day.

CINDERS

Got er cinder in yer eye?

Don't rub it: let some feller try
Ter git it aout.

Say he can't? Er don't know haow?

Shucks! Why, my boy, just sort er 'laow
He'll do it great.

Good fer him, an' good fer *you*!

Er lettin' this 'ere stranger do
This little job.

Independence is all right;

But frequent overdone, 'nough sight—
Remember that.

Guess there aint no statute law

'Gainst helpin';—that's what cinders's *for*,
Ter be took aout.

THE SONG OF NATURE

THE sea is whispering a word to me,
Nor would I turn unheeding ears away;
The rising sun a token gives, to be
Interpreted for my good weal to-day.

The moon, the stars, the sky serene and blue,
The scent of flowers and the song of birds,
The patter of the Summer showers, the dew
A potent message give—not empty words.

The butterfly, the rainbow, and the snows
Drifting across the azure vault above,
Would murmur to the heedful ear of vows
To take and keep, that we may build and
love.

The grand, hope-giving sunrise, and the dusk
Which spreads o'er town and wold—and
breathes sweet peace—
Give manna to the soul, not withered husk,
Promise beatitude, beyond release.

The laughter of the children!—Youth is theirs;
The world is wonderful and fresh and gay.
The gurgle and the swirl where tumbling dares
The brave, blithe brook! O glad, triumphant
day!

Hail! Tokens of a fuller, better hour!

Utopia! Beyond life's bolted door!

From this awak'ning springs a nobler power,

To elevate and comfort, evermore.

TO-DAY

LET us be kind to-day,

And do at least one brave, unselfish deed,
Out in the battle-worn and troubled world—
Out in the world of grievous wrongs, of pain,
Where men forget and Heav'n is far removed.—
Give none the right to say
Love has been put away—
Let us be kind to-day.

Let us be kind to-day,

For some may crave a strong and helping
hand,
And more may stand in need of gentle words :
To others just a smile and nod would prove
The pessimist's mistake—that no one cares.—
Help not the weak to stray :
Show them a brother's way—
Let us be kind to-day.

AFTER MANY YEARS

SHOULD success to-day reward
Work and waiting of long years,
And thus banish haunting fears,
Would I feel exhilaration
And victory's quick vibration?
Or would gladness merge in tears?

For eager, friendly faces
And hands that locked in mine
Have long since in sleep benign
Found complete emancipation
From a cold and stern creation—
The beyond doth give no sign.

In the years when youth dared all,
Fond and flowered years of hope
When I promised self to cope
With achievement—shy, elusive—
I'd speed with power conclusive;
Now, alas! I blindly grope.

Ah! the victor's laurel crown
Allured with power rare,
And it made me bold to dare—
Working, while the dear ones waited
With interest unabated,
Working, for the world was fair.

From the Perfect Land beyond
 Mayhap God will let them see,
For I *know* they care for me,
 That I've waged the bitter fight:
And I would have them know it's right,
 As they hoped and prayed 'twould be.

THE RADIANCE OF NIGHT

MOONBEAMS trace a golden, shimmering path
Across the mute and tranquil river's blue:
Whispers of the night lend heavenly charm,
And nature's kindly benisons endue.

Enraptured, I am musing in this realm
Of forms and faces ever dear to me;
Of those who often 'mid such scenes as this
Drank in with me Divine tranquillity.

Ah! could I but have these well-belovèd,
For one brief, perfect moment, just to share
This beauty, calm and fragrance of the night,
No feeble mundane joy could e'er compare.

NOR HESITATE

HITHER and thither they come and go—

These folk that hasten to and fro—

Some, surely, moved by good intent;

Others, alas, on mischief bent.

But never mind from whence they come,

Always part of the human sum!

Yes, brothers and sisters of yours—of mine,

Raised by example both broad and fine,

Lowered by contact with human swine.—

Let us meet their urgent need.

“WHEN MY LOVED ONE SMILES”

WHEN my loved one smiles
Dispelled are darkness' powers,
And sorrow takes its sad and solemn flight,
And all the earth is pure and gay and bright,
When my loved one smiles.

When my loved one smiles
False faces shamed do disappear,
Nor look at me from out the shrouded past
And blighted hopes that sometime held me
fast,
When my loved one smiles.

When my loved one smiles
I see a wondrous, hopeful light
Reflected in eyes of glorious brown,
Which seems to garb the earth in fairer
gown,
When my loved one smiles.

When my loved one smiles
Responsively I lay aside
The petty and the churlish, which before
Did bar me, though the wings of hope would
soar—
When my loved one smiles.

When my loved one smiles
My soul in ready answer wakes,
And bids me mourn no more this day or night,
But join the song of bounty and delight—
When my loved one smiles.

When my loved one smiles
Those galling shackles fall unclasped
That bound me hand and foot in greed and woe:
I wonder now and grieve at trammels low—
When my loved one smiles.

TO-MORROW—A PRAYER

LET me do better to-morrow
Than I have done to-day:
Let me work harder and longer
Than I have toiled to-day.
Let me be watchful, and render
To God His own—and be tender.
Teach me to love—and pray.

VOYAGES

IN the gloaming I am sitting,
While the birds are nestward flitting;
With the twinkling lights appearing, one by
one:
And my thoughts are sad and dreary;
Yes, my heart is strangely weary,
As I watch a brilliant craft—ere she is gone.

On a Summer's eve, delightful,
Long ago, I thought it rightful
That such peace and happiness I'd comprehend.
How those shining lights deceived me!
Now I ponder if it need be;—
For this craft that evening bore away a
friend.

Gracious offices had moulded
Knightly hands, forever folded
Long ago. Alas! The dragging years are
dark.
Now at midnight, sleep-forsaken,
Futile calls would fain awaken
The sepulchered. My soul is lone and stark.

Never more from him a greeting ;
Nor glad corporeal meeting.
When the steamer's lights had faded, he was
gone.
But one unpulsating letter,
For want of medium better,
Then the terse dispatch that made my heart
forlorn !

Now I watch this craft appearing,
As a pleased town it's nearing ;
And its lights and music mock me o'er the wave.
Ah ! to-night, perchance, it's bearing
Friend of someone, deeply caring,
Whose seared, desolated heart must still be
brave !

ONLY A YEAR

A YEAR ago to-day,

Two friends had I, as near
To me as friendship knows.

To-day, alas! I wake and find them not:
Naught doth avail glad voice or list'ning ear.

And yet the time was scarce so long ago
When felt I that I'd always had them,

Always held them, close to my inner heart
(And so would clasp—for life).

A year ago to-day!

A year ago to-day,

I knew that I could share
My grief and happiness

With them, and find surcease. Perplexity
Would vanish at their friendly, heartfelt word—

Or when they looked at me and smiled:—
But now all this is changed; I call in vain.

I stand confused while cruel echoes mock.
Alas! All promised fair—

A year ago to-day!

A year ago to-day,

I loved them, and I knew
That they, in turn, loved me;—

Don't ask me *how* I knew: 't was real, so real
It filled me with the bliss of truth complete.

I sought no hidden reasons, but rejoiced.
And all the sweet earth gladly quickened

Beneath my feet, because they understood—
Because they understood, in that dear time—

A year ago to-day!

A year ago to-day,

The hands that now lie cold, inert
Were wisely, gently leading me.

The eyes that now are dim looked into mine,
And found there something better than I knew.

Those lips, sealed in the changeless silence of
the night,
Then formed brave words of comfort and good-
cheer.—

I now see things to which I then was blind;
And one, the priceless and immeasurable balm,

The worth of which I did not—could not—
know,
A year ago to-day!

VOICES

It matters not to me what aliens think

(Their garments' hems scarce brush the hem
of mine)

But I would have those nearer ones to know

(Those who, at last, have found security)

Ah, me! I'd have them know that I had heard,

Had heard their sacred message—and obeyed.

WITH PASSING YEARS

OF what avail this vast estate?
Where lies the charm of jewel rare?
Possessions to my heart relate
As caviare 'mid desert's glare.

A time there was, alas, when such
Fond dreams of ownership did lure.
The mirage of advantage much
Did tempt me from known paths, secure.

Now earthly lessons, harshly taught,
Have turned my thoughts to sterner things;
And shown me that vain joy, ill-bought,
Enduring happiness ne'er brings.

The ownership of goods or gold
Smiles false enticement to the mind:
Rapacity, thus teased, doth hold—
As is entrapped the timid hind.

Sharp disappointments, grief and woe
Have shown me that these trifles, prized—
These baubles, trinkets—here below—
Oft leave possessors subsidized.

A SALUTARY NIGHTMARE

SAY! The other night I had a dream
That sure did bump me some:
I dreamt that I had croaked, for fair,
An' up to Heav'n had come;
Yes, old Saint Peter was waitin' there,
Keepin' a mob off the Golden Stair,
An' bluff was on the bum.

I says, "My good friend, it's just like this,
I've wisely played my hand;
But some fine day my wife will be here,
Huntin' a place to land:
I've done all I could for her below,
To teach her the things she'd ought to know,
But she can't understand."

"I have a hunch that my wife meant well,
Tried hard, and all that stuff,
But she had fool notions, cried too much,
Sometimes handed me guff:—
Still, ain't there some place where she'd be pat?
Saint Peter, what do you know 'bout that?
Don't let her cut up rough."

Says he, "You sure have the plumb wrong dope;
All to the good is she:
So don't say a word, your wife's in right,
And well deserves to be.
'Cause any woman who's stood for you
For twenty tough years will surely do—
Yours for the brimstone! See?

A WORD

THE youth approached the aged sage

With troubled mien, and thus he spake:

“By sweat of my brow I have dearly bought,

I have fashioned and planned and built and
wrought,

Have toiled and striven and prayed—for
naught—

Forsooth, the world

Hath heeded not—

Nor paused.”

Thus spake the sage: “Thy heart was amiss;

For thought of Reward was goading thee:

Better be friend of Truth than slave of Fame,

Better know worth of men—and whence they
came—

Better to garner love than gild a name.

Live wisely—trust;

Be brave this day.

Godspeed!”

ANOTHER CHANCE

A LITTLE of the fading light remains,
Lingering in the western sky, a trice.
(Oh! will this terrestrial stay suffice?)
Eternity, the reaper, ne'er refrains.

Pray, is there not some high, neglected thing
I was to do and would have done had time
But given warning of the final chime?
If so, it must be done ere time takes wing.

I would not face the mist-enshrouded way
Of souls that know the far-called clarion cry,
And leave this undone thing for those to try
Whose falt'ring strength, alas, but serves to-day.

No warrant now for me to hesitate,
In craven lamentation or regret;
For I must make this final effort yet,
To do the task that must not call too late.

And thus I ask the grace of brief delay,
That I may meager restitution make
For moments that were not my own to take
From everlasting time, God's endless day.

The darkness falls, yet "Death, where is thy
sting?"

Or victory, obliterating grave?

Within the compass of success I brave

Dark death, for death hath taught a higher
thing.

LEAVING PORT

FAR away the ship is sailing,
And my mist-dimmed eyes are failing
As I listen to the wailing
Of the winds o'er waters gray.
Will the sea give back, I wonder?
Or the good ship rend asunder?
Break a loving heart, for plunder?—
I await a fateful day.

BROTHERS

THEY laid him in the church-yard when so
young

That life had left no impress and no stain;
That hope and truth and dear belief were his;
And yet Fate bade another to remain.

That sweet release was given him before
The body wearied and the heart grew faint:
Not after friends had proven selfish, false;
And love had died in long and bitter plaint.

They laid him in the church-yard, 'neath the
sward—

Their first-born and their joy, their best be-
lov'd—
And turning saw the other who remained;
And wondered why their God had so removed.

Throughout their lives the cruel mystery
Will hover—its infinite cause withheld;
And all the days of him who fettered is
The cry comes struggling to his lips,
“Repelled.”

ON THE TRAIN

To the city I am going

Though the morn be gray and dour,
Not because I crave excitement

Or yearn for wrested power,

But because I need the money

For my husky kids—and "Honey";

Though it may seem rather funny,

Sometimes I almost like this hour!

STRANGERS—TO-DAY

WE'RE strangers, meeting in the street;
A hasty glance, and then we pass.
Ah! What know I of his travail?
The blighting cares his days entail?
He numbers me among the mass.—
We're strangers, meeting in the street.

We're strangers, meeting in the street;
Yet one another we may know,
In days undreamed of, yet to come;
When, mayhap, far from city's hum
The seed of friendship we may sow.—
Now strangers, meeting in the street.

We strangers, meeting in the street,
Have lost so much! been blind, indeed,
As unrelated (so we thought)
We went our way, unwarned, untaught
That when we met we had one need—
Though strangers, meeting in the street.

Full many strangers have I met:
Time's crucible in most showed worth;
In knowing these, delight I found—
A wealth of friendliness, unbound—
I feel that there should be, on earth,
No strangers, meeting in the street.

OUR NURSERY WARRIORS

HARK! 'tis the rat-a-tat-tat and the toot-toot-toot

Of the soldiers' brave advance;
And their bold array, as they seek the fray,
Doth warklike mien enhance.
What foe would stand,
To face this band,
And meet its driven lance?

We must ever be kind to these soldier boys
(Though their song is blithe to-day)
For the road is long, while the sun is strong—
They'll march so far away!
"Kiss me, my boy,
My soldier boy,
A Mother's heart must pay."

THE CITY STREETS

THESE people hast'ning to and fro
 (Quickly they come and quickly go)
What is their mission? Why such speed?
 Something worthy, or only greed?
They're off'ring help or doing harm?
 They're moved by faith or by alarm?
I often wish that I could know
 Why so quickly they come and go.
But *if* I knew, perhaps my heart
 Would ache the more at human mart.

THE HURDY GURDY MAN

HE doesn't look to me quite clean,
Nor do I like his foxy mien:
I'm afraid he is rapacious
(But he's most polite and gracious).
From whence those earrings did he glean?

His notes assault my outraged ear
And I am filled with dread and fear
Lest he shall never go away
(While all the children hope he'll stay).
When will he move his clam'rous gear?

Yes, I must hold my peace and bear
Aural assaults I'd never dare
Resent. This villain is their friend;
On him the "kids" their money spend.—
Confound (but don't suppress) this blare.

BEDTIME

THE work of to-day is ended;
For good or for ill, it's done:
The record is writ and blotted—
Now peace, till to-morrow's sun.
But I hope and I pray that ever
In the course of the troublous day
Have I heeded the rights of others
And thought of their difficult way;
For just what the day has cost them
None but themselves can say.

A REBUKE

ON the sands I stood
And humbly asked this question of the sea,
“If I should bring my fairest work to thee,
Wouldst thou then make one precious gift to
me?—
To know the hearts of men.”

The sea replied,
“Thy man-wrought work done selfishly to-day
Will vanish, e’en as dust is blown away;
And thou *wilt* know the hearts of men, some
day—
When thought of self hath died.”

THE FRIENDS OF LONG AGO

REFLECTION comes with hours of sweet repose:
Gracious hands are reaching out toward me;
A sleeping something stirs and wakes within
My weary soul, when long stilled voices flow.

A dream, you say? Mayhap, but 'tis to me
More real than life of motion, sound and
touch.—

A part of me has slept since those have slept
To whom I gave, beneath the Wand of Youth.

ASSURANCE

I

You are prone to say, "Put it off another day."
(" 'Ware wire" of delay).
"Simply will I borrow moments from to-morrow"
(Playing fast and loose with sorrow);
"Yes, of course, in time I'll pay."

CHORUS

*A fool is full of confidence,
As asp is full of sting,
While in the world he glides along
His empty song to sing;
"Oh! there is time, a lot of time;
Drudging work I carry over,
In the fields of life a rover,
I'm in everlasting clover—
For the day is in its prime."*

II

Should we expect to stay on earth and have
our way?
("Bye and bye," you say?)
Fools! To-morrow's dawning finds one friend
a-mourning
(Men of grisly work are warning,
("Take his whim'ring dog away").

CHORUS

*A fool is full of confidence,
As asp is full of sting,
While in the world he glides along
His empty song to sing;
“Oh! there is time, a lot of time;
Drudging work I carry over,
In the fields of life a rover,
I’m in everlasting clover—
For the day is in its prime.”*

A REBUKE TO MELANCHOLY

THE Summer rain gives not in vain
 Its dewy shade;
The Summer skies a paradise
 Of earth have made.
The verdant hills, the fruitful fields,
 The watered vales and limpid lakes—
All in my soul a pæan wakes,
 To bless the power that beauty wields.

BLUE JEAN PHILOSOPHY

I

SAY! Sometimes in the evenin'
I'm a-feelin' sort er blue;
Life don't amount ter nothin'—
Got some bills that's overdue:
The house is still an' lonesome
An' my rhumatiz is bad;
Seems if I aint got nothin'
Fer ter cheer an' make me glad.
Then I go ter bed a-sighin';
Think I'm better off a-lyin'
Under bedclothes than a-tryin'
Fer ter dodge the toll er years.

II

The mornin'? Ho! that's diff'rent;
Then I aint got *time* ter mope.
There's dewy cobwebs shinin',
Twitt'rin' birds is full er hope;
Fust thing I know I'm whistlin'—
Tune is chock-a-block with joy—
Act's if there warn't no worries,
Smart an' happy as a boy!
Then I do my chores a-hustlin',
(Women folks 'bout grub is bustlin')
Breezes through the elms is rustlin'—
Gosh! It's fun ter be alive!

YOUTH, AGE—THE SEA

I stood by the sea, remembering—

Remembering the hopes of youth;

The high intent, the pledges given to self:

For in that earlier hour I had vowed and
planned.

And something of the strong, quick blood of
youth

Surged through my worn, old heart,

And stirred to life my sluggish blood.

(The world was new again).

But then, alas, came sadness so intense

That sea and shore were lost, and winds
blew not.

Yes, I was alone with my dead—

My dead, unsepulchred!—

My dead, “unhallowed and unsung!”

RESTING IN FAITH

THE soft, sweet whispers of the fragrant
night—

Intimate sounds, unbroken and unspoiled—
Caress my troubled ears, as healing balm

Doth soothe the outer hurt. Among the best
Of gifts Divine is this—the boon of night:

The boon of night, which had its birth in love!

Eternal, jeweled canopy, high-arched,

Bespeaks this care, which thought of beauty
here.—

Drowsy waters lap embowered shores;

Sweet-scented winds blow kindly through the
trees.—

The strange, full, soul-uplifting Peace of God

Abides with me—"I lay me down to sleep."

INDIAN SUMMER

THE tender glow of fleeting days!—

A mellow, swiftly passing glow!—

A stillness and a fragrant haze,

Etherealizing earth below!

Sweet lingering of Summer's joys!

Sensations dear, yet fraught with pain,

Bring peace to spirits jarred by noise

Of mundane tumult, harsh and vain.

These soft, sad, silent, wistful days

Find parallel in life of mine.

For I, with ardent, hopeful gaze,

Did once quaff eagerly life's wine.

Now, alas! toward Winter's blight

I turn a face unused to mirth—

To cold and desolation fight—

For Winter brings contrasting dearth.

GOOD NIGHT

MAY you sleep to-night, good friend,
Sleep that God in mercy sends :
May your cares and woes depart ;
May your weary, troubled heart
Know the peace that Heaven lends.

A FOREST RIDDLE

WHAT song do you sing,
 O piping brook?
Is it love you bring,
 O canny brook?
Or is it a message from far away?
 To quicken my heart all the livelong day,
O wise old brook! Secretive brook!

Are you sad or gay,
 O puzzling brook?
Do you sing alway,
 O tuneful brook?
Or do you but prate of delights gone by?
 Which endure for a single day, to die,
O teasing brook! Bewild'ring brook!

Are you shy or coy,
 O charming brook?
Do you jest and toy,
 O playful brook?
Or *are* you so truly, merrily glad,
 That you frolic and dance and leap like mad?
O lively brook! O sportive brook!

What do you tell me,
O babbling brook?
Whisper your secret,
O friendly brook!
Do you bid the world be joyous and bright?
And, as living, in life find sheer delight?
O baffling brook! Bewitching brook!

JUST TO BE A MAN

I, UNINSPIRED, cannot be great
And lift brave souls to braver things,
Or soar aloft on proud, swift wings;
But love and hope and work and wait
I can, if I can not be great.

MY WIFE

LONG days have dragged,
Days given up to toilsome task.
Down upon thy head the sun
Hath beaten fiercely;
Thy back hath known a cruel burden;
Yet thou hast not faltered,
Nor given up to fear thy heart.
And thou hast borne with me,
Borne with me and hoped for better things;
And loved—yea, more than all else
Hath been this hallowed crown of Love.

.

Now that the work is done
I lay it at thy feet
And ask of thee
That thou wilt take it for thine own.
Would that it were better,
Less beset by fault,
Less halting—in closer bond with Art;
A token worthier, befitting and complete.

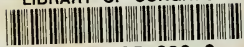
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Belovèd! Error-ridden as 'tis found to be,
Still, it is mine—my best;
And I with love and hope have watched it grow,
Have trembled lest it die:
“Flesh of my flesh”—but little less!—
The blessèd peace of night and midday heat
Alike have known me breathlessly intent;
For it were mine—and it were meant for thee.

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